



The President's Daily Brief

1 December 1972

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

1 December 1972

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

In South Vietnam, both sides are continuing preparations for a cease-fire. (Page 1)

The government offensive in Quang Tri Province appears to be forcing the Communists to reposition key units. (Page 2)



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A Soviet-built floating drydock being towed to Cuba [redacted] (Page 4)

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SOUTH VIETNAM

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South Vietnamese officials are continuing intensive preparations for a cease-fire.

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In the delta, a 90-man "regional special action squad" is being formed from police units. The squad will be used to deal with low-level Viet Cong cease-fire violations. A 300-man "special team" is also being formed from police units to handle riots and demonstrations.

In almost every province, the South Vietnamese have been conducting meetings at various administrative levels to explain the government's position in preparation for a cease-fire. Provincial security commands have been directed to strengthen their units before the announcement is made. In addition, cadets from the military schools are being sent into the countryside to explain the cease-fire and to bolster popular support for the government during the period of intense political competition expected to follow.

* * *

The Communists are telling their cadre in the South that the bulk of North Vietnamese troops will stay on in South Vietnam under one guise or another following a cease-fire. Most of the accounts indicate that the North Vietnamese forces will be broken down and dispersed in smaller-sized units, from squad to battalion size, and will be put under the ostensible control of the "National Liberation Front" military apparatus.

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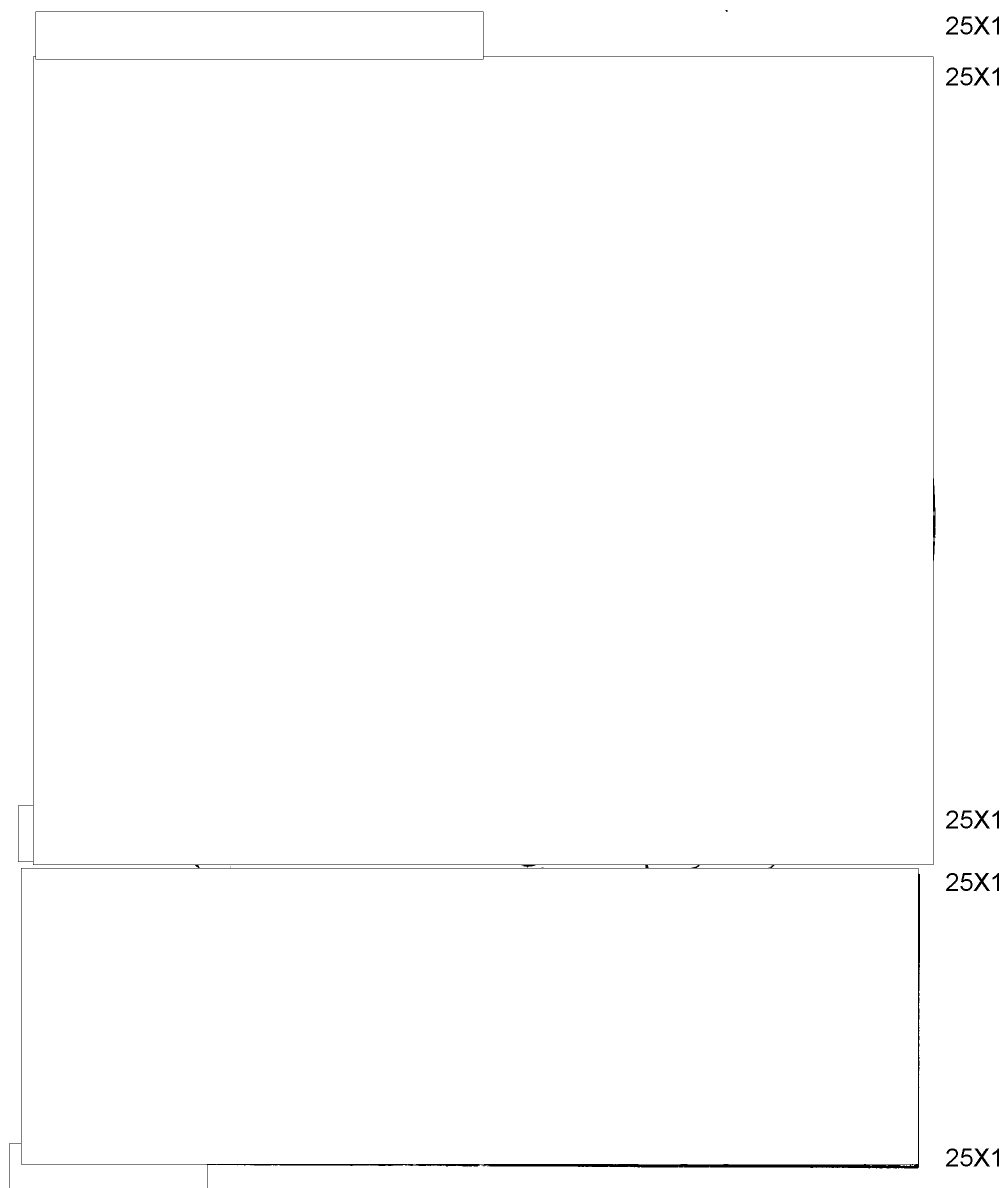
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SOUTH VIETNAM

The government offensive in Quang Tri Province appears to be forcing a major redistribution of enemy units. Two Communist divisions--one of which has been operating for several months west of Hue--appear to be shifting into place to strengthen a line along the Thach Han and Cua Viet rivers. Moreover, Communist forces in the area have been reinforced and re-equipped.

Should the South Vietnamese breach the river lines, the northerners would be hard pressed to hold the coastal plain.



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CHINA

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USSR-CUBA

A Soviet merchant tug is towing a floating drydock to Cuba. Built at a Baltic shipyard, the drydock left the Soviet port of Klaipeda on 25 October. Pravda has confirmed that the drydock is going to Cuba, but did not say how it will be used.

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In the mid-1960s the Soviets supplied British-built floating cranes and Soviet-built drydocks for commercial use in Cuba's ports. This equipment was also towed to Cuba by Soviet merchant tugs.

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NOTES

North Vietnam: Two North Vietnamese coastal merchant ships have eluded the mines around Haiphong and have been recently seen by the US Navy in Chinese waters. Both were photographed in Haiphong harbor as late as 20 November. These are the first two merchant ships to depart Haiphong since the harbor was mined in May. Both ships are relatively small and, if they left the port empty, could have taken advantage of high tides in late November to skirt the minefields. The main channel into Haiphong is still mined and could not be used by ocean-going ships.

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Norway:

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